

SENATE BILL 180

EXHIBIT 2
DATE April 13, 2015
HB SB 180

Senate Bill 180 is a bill to help keep the disabled and elderly in their homes and rural communities and improve their quality of life . SOUNDS IMPORTANT! IT IS.

How? This bill will maintain and substantially improve paratransit opportunities for the disabled and infirm elderly across the state. First, what is paratransit? Paratransit is the term used for the type of transportation consisting of small wheelchair accessible vans and buses that pick people up at their home by appointment, deliver them to an event, (medical appointment, senior center, market) then pick them up later and take them home. Almost all systems require 24 hour notice. Very, very little same day service.

Is it important? Incredibly important!! Without paratransit people become prisoners in their own homes. After shelter and medical care, transportation is the #1 issue to this group. If people in a rural town like Terry don't have means to get to a medical appointment in a larger city, they must move, either to a nursing home or a larger city. Paratransit is this group of people's lifeline to society. How are we doing? In the urban areas of Great Falls, Billings and Missoula – pretty good, if you don't mind a 6:00 p.m. curfew Monday through Friday; a 5:30 p.m. curfew on Saturday and no services on Sunday. The four cities of Bozeman, Helena,

Kalispell and Butte have fixed route service, reasonable paratransit service, if you live in the city or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the fixed route. After these seven cities, the service become pretty hit and miss.

Who are the providers and how are they funded? There are three urban systems, 39 rural systems and many, many non-profits such as AWARE, Aging Services, Quality of Concepts and Easter Seals Good Will. In many of the rural areas a non-profit co-ordinates transportation activities. Funding comes from the Federal government, some city and county levies and the State of Montana. Montana's contribution is generated by a .30% state appropriation from the Motor Vehicle revenue fund. This generates about \$300,000 and is woefully inadequate. The revenue goes into the Transportation Assistance for the disabled and elderly account (Transade) and is administered by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). All transit districts and non-profits apply to MDT for money. The Transade account is so important because it provides matches for Federal Money. For equipment the match is 14%; for operations (drivers, dispatch, fuel, maintenance, storage) the match is – 46%. During the past year over 60 entities applied for Transade money. With \$300,000 in revenue this is only \$5,000/entity. A 14% match for a \$50,000 van is \$7000. In addition you need money for operations. By changing the revenue stream to 25% of the Rental Car Sales tax there will be \$800,000 in available funds in the Transade account or

\$13,000/entity. This change will significantly improve transportation opportunities in our smaller cities and towns and keep people in their homes.

The other issue is the group requiring these services is increasing rapidly (Baby Boomers).

Sen. Brian Hoven
SD No. 13